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General Comment

The policies and actions which the United States might feasibly adopt and undertake against Cuba (short of the employment of military force) will at best probably have only marginal effect on Cuba, as compared to the policies and actions of the Castro regime itself and those of the USSR. We should measure, therefore, our policies and programs (the utilization of United States manpower, time, money and other resources together with the risk of Cuban exile lives) with respect to Cuba against the likelihood of significantly and favorably influencing the course of events in Cuba and against the risks involved for the United States elsewhere.

A commitment now to employ United States military force against Cuba some time in the future (choices (c) and (d) below) would appear to be neither feasible nor desirable. The basic question would appear to be whether there are actions other than United States military intervention the United States can undertake against Cuba which are likely to hasten significantly the downfall of the Castro regime. Specific comments on the four possible courses of action follow:

- a) Cancel operational plans; treat Cuba as a Bloc nation; protect hemisphere from it.

Comment

Cuba will probably continue to be mis-managed for the foreseeable future, even if we did nothing to exacerbate the situation. The spectacle of a mis-managed Cuba with a discontented population would damage the Soviet, communist and Castro images in the Hemisphere and elsewhere. Cuba would probably remain an economic and perhaps to some extent a political burden for the Bloc.

In treating Cuba as a Bloc nation, we could maintain the current program of diplomatic, economic and psychological pressure upon the regime as well as that of infiltrating intelligence agents. This program coupled with Castro and Soviet policies may result in alienating the population from the Castro regime to the extent that a revolt may occur. Other circumstances may arise in which the Castro regime may be influenced to adopt a more neutralist course, without necessarily altering its internal structure.

If the public posture of the United States became one of accommodation leading eventually to re-establishment of diplomatic relations with the Castro

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regime, however, the communist Castro elements in the Hemisphere and elsewhere would probably be encouraged and the anti-communist Castro elements disheartened.

- possible
- b) Exert all possible diplomatic, economic, psychological and other pressures to overthrow the Castro-Communist regime without overt U.S. military commitment.

Comment

The essential distinction between this course of action and the foregoing would appear to be that of engaging in more active covert operations, such as sabotage, and infiltration of guerrillas, in the hope that such action might provide the catalyst to hasten a revolt by the Cuban people.

If this course were adopted, as compared to (a) above, the Castro regime would probably be kept more off balance and forced to employ more of its resources defensively. The anti-Castro elements in Cuba would probably be more encouraged and may undertake more actions against the regime than would otherwise be the case. The Castro regime would probably tighten its defenses and engage in more severe and widespread repression. Cuba under the foregoing circumstances would also be an unattractive model.

The additional covert activities that may be undertaken would, if successful, probably enhance the possibility of sufficiently broad popular disaffection, active resistance and intrigue at top governmental levels to cause a change in the regime or possibly bring about a situation of virtual civil war under circumstances in which it might prove politically and militarily feasible for the U.S. to intervene with force.

If this course were adopted, it should be recognized that 1) this could be a long term program in which the overthrow of the Castro regime would not be guaranteed; 2) barring the unforeseen, further overt U.S. diplomatic and economic actions against Cuba are limited in scope; 3) Cuban recruits are reluctant to risk their lives in fomenting disorders without a commitment that U.S. military force will be employed if necessary; 4) Cuba could still act against the Hemisphere, although with probably reduced effectiveness; and 5) indications of greater covert U.S. activity could result in rallying some indecisive elements of the Cuban population to support the regime.

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- c) Commit U.S. to help Cubans overthrow the Castro-Communist regime, with a step-by-step phasing to ensure success, including the use of U.S. military force if required at the end.

Comment

The essential difference between this course of action and (b) above would appear to be the commitment to employ U.S. military force if required. Many of the considerations described in (b) above are applicable to this course of action as well. If this course were adopted and the employment of U.S. military force could be guaranteed, the overthrow of the Castro regime could probably be brought about.

If this course were adopted, it should be recognized that 1) employment of U.S. military force in Cuba under circumstances that are considered unjustified under international law would constitute intervention, would place us in violation of the UN and OAS charters, would have adverse repercussions in the Hemisphere, would probably jeopardize the Alliance for Progress program and could make us the object of Rio Treaty Article 6 action; 2) the world situation may be such that it would be politically and militarily unfeasible for us to fulfill a commitment to employ U.S. military force; 3) such a commitment to Cuban exiles would become quickly and widely known and this could seriously complicate our relations with a number of friendly nations; 4) such a commitment could enable the Cuban exiles to "call the tune" and place the U.S. in an untenable position; 5) knowledge of a commitment to employ U.S. military force would solidify internal support for Castro at least in the short term; 6) if U.S. military force is employed, the Bloc would probably exert strong pressure in areas of the world important to the U.S. national interest and where U.S. military force may have to be made available; 7) as the phases progress, the "noise level" would increase substantially and the U.S. must be prepared to defend convincingly in international forums against charges of plotting to overthrow another government.

- d) Use a provocation and overthrow the Castro-Communist regime by U.S. military force.

Comment

It is assumed that the provocation visualized is an action by the Castro regime which would justify, under international law, the employment of U.S. military force against Cuba. If such is not the provocation, the considerations regarding the use of U.S. military force described in (c) above would be applicable, only more so. While the Castro regime is unpredictable, the possibility of the

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regime engaging in an action which would provide us with an opportunity, justified under international law to employ U.S. military force, would appear to be remote.

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